

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF A BOARD MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY,  
21 OCTOBER 2004 AT 2.30 PM IN THE BOARD ROOM**

**1. PRESENT**

Mrs M Alexander (Chairman)

Mr P H Aiken  
Councillor J F Bell  
Councillor P Brannigan  
Mr M P Campbell  
Alderman F E Crowe  
Dr P Cunningham  
Mrs M E Donnell  
Councillor J Hanna  
Councillor W J Martin  
Mr W Mayne

Mr P C McAleavey  
Councillor P P McAleer  
Mrs D A McBride  
Mrs C M McCaul  
Rev C D McClure  
Very Rev L M McVeigh  
Very Rev S Rice  
Mr J W Saunders  
Mr A G Sleator  
Rev Canon W R Twaddell

**2. IN ATTENDANCE**

Mrs H M McClenaghan, Mrs K C Ryan, Messrs W Burke, T M Heron, J F Curran, B O'Hara and Mrs L Davidson.

**3. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Mrs S R Brownlee, Rev J Byrne, Councillor J Feehan, Mrs S M B Fitzpatrick, Councillor I E B Hanna, Alderman G A Hatch, Mr C Mackin, Councillor S McRoberts, Councillor B Monteith and Rev Canon F D Swann.

**4. APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS**

It was unanimously agreed to adopt the report\*\* (B/10/04/2) prepared by the Human Resources Manager.

*(Councillor J Hanna and Mr P McAleavey entered the meeting at 2.34 pm.)*

**5. MINUTES**

On the proposal of Councillor Martin, seconded by Very Rev Fr Rice, the minutes\* (B/9/04/3) of the meeting held on 16 September 2004 were approved as an accurate record and were signed by the Chairman.

**6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

**6.1 RESIGNATION FROM THE BOARD : MRS E GILL (8)**

Mrs McClenaghan reported that a letter had been received from the Department of Education which pointed out that in view of the reconstitution of the

Education and Library Boards in 2005 it would prefer if the Board would accept that the seat vacated by Mrs Gill be left unfilled. As Mrs Gill served on two Committees only this was agreed.

## **6.2 SCHOOL BUDGETS (6.6)**

Mrs McClenaghan reported that Mr Butler and she had visited schools and met Boards of Governors and parents and in some cases teaching staff of seven schools. She said that there was dismay at possible closures. In the case of three schools an amalgamation was being considered. Mrs McClenaghan said she did not expect that proposals would be brought to the November meeting of the Education Committee. She said that she hoped the Minister would reply to her letter of 30 September 2004 before the first Development Proposal was brought to the Education Committee.

*(Rev C D McClure entered the meeting at 2.41 pm.)*

Councillor J Hanna referred to Loughbrickland Primary School and stressed the need for a very vigorous campaign to keep the school open.

Rev Canon Twaddell emphasised the need for some representation to be made to the Government to keep people in rural areas.

Mrs Donnell referred to the concern of Principals of other schools who had smaller enrolments than those affected.

Rev Mr McClure felt that the Board had been working towards a positive outcome but that relationships were now placed in a crisis situation because of the Minister's actions.

In reply to a question from Councillor J Hanna, Mrs McClenaghan said that she had explored the issue of rural proofing and referred to a document from the Department of Agriculture which stated that a primary school with fewer than 89 pupils was not viable.

It was agreed that a letter should be sent to each MP and each MLA on the issues in rural communities particularly the effects on schools.

Mr Heron reported on a meeting he had attended, organised by the Department, with all Education partners about the Draft Priorities and Budget. The outcome for Northern Ireland, published on 12 October 2004, set the resources available for all Departments in Northern Ireland for the next three years. In overall terms, the increase shown for Health from 2004/05 to 2007/08 was 23.5% and for Education the increase was 11.5% less than half the increase for Health. For all other Departments the increase was 9.6%.

Mr Heron explained that in terms of recurrent expenditure the increase for Education for next year overall was 5.5%, with increases in the following years of 2% and 3.7%. Within the 5.5% next year there were certain additional pressures for which the Department had bid and received funding. Over the next three years there would be funding of £20.1m to take forward post-primary reform, £21.8m for special education needs provision and £3m for the new

curriculum. The NILGOSC employer's contributions would increase from 4.6% to 8% and £17.3m had been obtained over the next three years for this plus other cost increases.

The Department had also emphasised that as part of the Draft Priorities and Budget process each Department had been required to come up with efficiency savings, both resource releasing and non-resource releasing, each comprising approximately £20m for 2005/06, £40m the next year and £60m the year after. In terms of resource releasing, capital efficiencies comprised the major part over the next three years being, £11.1m, £27.2m and £34.3m; recurrent efficiencies were £9.6m, £14.7m and £29.3m. Mr Heron then outlined the main elements in the recurrent efficiencies:-

	<b>2005/06</b>	<b>2006/07</b>	<b>2007/08</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
ELB procurement	3.0	3.0	3.0
Administration	0	2.0	2.0
Teacher absenteeism substitution	0.6	1.4	2.0
Zero rating reception pupils	0.3	0.6	0.9
Raise pre-school admission age	0	0	2.1
Summer literacy/numeracy schemes	1.0	1.0	1.0
Good Practice Initiative	1.6	1.6	1.6
Reading Recovery	2.2	3.5	4.2
Charging for concessionary transport	0.6	1.0	1.0
MPV's to replace taxis	0.3	0.6	1.0
Reduced costs in transport	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>10.5</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>9.6</b>	<b>14.7</b>	<b>29.3</b>

Mr Heron emphasised that all of these efficiencies had been cut out of the baseline allocation and it was now up to Boards to deliver these savings one way or the other. He also emphasised that both he and other Board Chief Finance Officers had informed the Department that in their opinion some of these savings were not realistic. Given the very considerable financial pressures that Boards were already under, very difficult decisions would have to be taken by Boards and the financial outlook was very bleak.

Mr Heron said that the Department had emphasised that Boards would have to live and plan to live within resources next year. He said that on a brighter note the increase in the capital side for next year was 18.6%, with a small reduction the following year and an increase the year after.

Alderman Crowe expressed concern that the introduction of Costello was going to cost money and said that a lot of areas were going to have a lot of difficulty. He thought that MPs should be made aware of what was planned.

In reply to a question from Mr Sleator, Mr Heron said that increases for other Departments had not been discussed at the meeting but it had been emphasised Health had increased because of its established priority. He said that it was a consultation document and it may be possible to make some minor changes and consultees had up until 7 December 2004 to make their views known. The Department was keen that Boards made their voices heard.

Mr Aiken asked if there had been any discussion about the cost implications for the Review of Public Administration and how the savings were going to be divided up among Education and Library Boards and would this Board suffer. Mr Heron said that the Review of Public Administration had not been discussed. He said that the Department had not given any information on how individual Boards would be affected.

In reply to a question from Councillor J Hanna, Mr Heron stated that these figures would be incorporated in the Board minutes.

In reply to a question from Councillor J Hanna, Mr Heron said that he thought the Council rates were built into the Northern Ireland figures.

In reply to a question from Mr Campbell, Mr Heron said that the bid for Curran 2 had been unsuccessful.

Mr McAleavey said this was disappointing news and asked who made the submission and queried if it was the Department who were lacking in ability to put together a bid.

Mrs McClenaghan informed members that, as they would expect, officers had looked at the problems and the general reduction in funding which was expected. She said that she had been speaking to colleagues in other Boards to agree a common strategy and would continue to do so. Further information would be brought to members in detail for decision making. She said that this was just to let members know what officers had been looking at in terms of cutbacks and outlined a range of services where cutbacks may be considered. Any decisions made would be with the knowledge that cutbacks would happen across several Board areas. She said that there would be a further meeting of Chief Executives, Finance Officers and Administrative Officers in November with a view to more details being brought to the November Board meeting. She said that any cuts would have to be applied from 1 April 2005 and she welcomed any comments. The Chairman asked if members would be happy to leave further comment until more information was forthcoming in order to make decisions.

**6.3 2004 PAY AWARD : LETTER DATED 10 SEPTEMBER 2004 TO ALL STAFF (12)**

Mrs McClenaghan reported that payments to staff as negotiated had been made.

**6.4 EDUCATION ACTION ZONES : LETTER OF 12 AUGUST 2004 FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (11)**

Mr Burke reported that four bids had been made which covered ethnic minorities, young people with mental health issues, young people with special needs and under achievement with particular emphasis on early prevention and parenting. While the bids had been acknowledged there was no indication of how successful they would be. He said that he did not feel optimistic that Education Action Zones would be significantly funded.

## **7. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS**

### **7.1 REPORT ON MEETING WITH THE MINISTER**

The Chairman reported on the meeting with the Minister and said that while there were several items on the agenda the discussion actually covered only two of the areas: Finance and Review of Public Administration. She said that the Minister had denied the report that there would be one authority with responsibility for schools and when the Minister was asked to clarify if this meant one authority with other interests remaining he did not respond. She explained that other agenda items were not discussed. The Minister had challenged her and said that this Board had the highest costs at centre. She was seeking from the Department the figures that the Minister held. Mr Gardiner had said that Boards were content that schools should overspend but the Chairman told him that this Board had a Policy Committee to deal with this. The Chairman further explained that the meeting would be reconvened again in November to deal with Education Action Zones, bullying and several other issues.

### **7.2 NORTH EAST OF ENGLAND CONFERENCE (5-7 JANUARY 2005)**

Mrs McClenaghan reported that while no invitation had yet been received some information was available on the website. She informed members that the Conference was entitled 'Leading Together', with three keynote speakers and workshops. As the programme appeared to be sparse and at a cost of £800 per person attending it was agreed that attendance could not be justified.

*(During the discussion of this item Mr P McAleavey left the meeting at 3.35 pm.)*

### **7.3 ATTENDANCE AT PRIZE DISTRIBUTIONS**

The Chairman reported that she and Board officers had been attending school prize distributions.

### **7.4 SOD CUTTING CEREMONY AT THE NEW ANNAGHMORE AND TULLYROAN PRIMARY SCHOOL**

The Chairman reported that Mrs McClenaghan and she had attended the sod cutting ceremony earlier in the morning for the new Annaghmore and Tullyroan Primary School. She said that the site and the children were lovely and explained that the new school would be a five-teacher school with resource areas and a central hall.

The Chairman further reported that Mrs McClenaghan and she hoped to resume school visits in November.

*(Councillor P Brannigan and Councillor P P McAleer left the meeting at 3.37 pm.)*

## **8. SERVICES COMMITTEE : MINUTES**

Members agreed to deal with this minute out of sequence.

### **8.1 APOLOGIES (3)**

The Chairman said that she had submitted an apology which had not been recorded.

On the proposal of Very Rev Fr Rice, seconded by Mr Mayne, the minutes\* (S/9/04/9) of the meeting held on 30 September 2004 were adopted.

## **9. 2005-2008 DRAFT PRIORITIES AND BUDGET**

Mrs McClenaghan referred to the paper\* (B/10/04/6) on budgets which Mr Heron had previously talked about and gave details of the public consultation meetings on the budgets. She said that the nearest meeting was on the morning of 18 November 2004 in the Canal Court Hotel, Newry and urged members to support Education through their attendance.

*(Very Rev S Rice left the meeting at 3.55 pm and Rev Canon W R Twaddell left the meeting at 4.00 pm.)*

## **10. EDUCATION COMMITTEE : MINUTES**

Mrs McBride referred to an inaccuracy on page 18 and said that it should be recorded that Councillor J Hanna and she left the meeting at 4.05 pm.

### **10.1 SELB SCHOOL MAGAZINE COMPETITION : PRESENTATION OF PRIZES (4)**

Mrs McBride drew attention to this minute and said that fifty-six schools had entered the competition. The judge, a Cookstown Newspaper reporter, was very impressed by the standard.

### **10.2 REVIEW OF PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND : DRAFT RESPONSE (6.1)**

Mrs McBride drew attention to this minute and to the presentation made by Mr Sandford, School Policy and Planning Branch of the Department of Education. She said that it had been stressed that common standards should be applied across all sectors relating to accommodation and staff qualifications and that the Review of Children First had not come out at the same time as the Review of Pre-School Education. She felt that there was a need for this within pre-school education and for settings to be located within reasonable travelling distances from children's homes. She stressed that caution should be taken regarding the phasing out of reception provision.

In reply to a question from the Chairman, Mr Burke confirmed that the response had been submitted by the date.

### **10.3 PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION ADVISORY GROUP : MINUTES OF MEETINGS HELD ON 10 JUNE, 11 AUGUST AND 20 SEPTEMBER 2004 (8)**

Mrs Donnell drew attention to this minute and said that as she was not a member of PEAG she could not have proposed the minutes. It was noted that Mrs Alexander had proposed the minutes.

Subject to the correction of an error in the heading of minute 6.1 in the word 'Education', on the proposal of Mrs McBride, seconded by Mrs Donnell, the minutes\* (E/10/04/7) of the meeting held on 5 October 2004 were adopted.

The Chairman said that she hoped that members had all read the Draft Response to the Review of Pre-School Education so that they knew what the Board's position was.

Councillor J Hanna congratulated Mrs McBride as Chairperson of the Association of Northern Ireland Education and Library Boards on the wonderful conference in the Slieve Donard. Mrs McBride thanked members for their support.

## **11. LIBRARY COMMITTEE : MINUTES**

### **11.1 PROPOSED NEW STAFF STRUCTURE (5.1)**

Mr Campbell drew attention to this minute and said that the proposed new staffing structure was progressing slowly due to many factors, one being Job Evaluation.

### **11.2 PUBLIC LIBRARY USER SURVEYS 2003-2004 (7)**

Mr Campbell drew attention to this minute and said that a survey of user services had been carried out across the Library Service. The survey showed that the quality of stock was a matter of concern but users were happy with the quality of service. Some areas of concern needed to be addressed. Mr Campbell said that there was a high response to the survey and congratulated those involved in the exercise.

### **11.3 REVIEW OF SERVICE PROVISION (9)**

Mr Campbell drew attention to this minute, and said that the Library Committee had made no recommendations as to the closure of libraries. He said that a Special Meeting of the Library Committee would be held on 27 October 2004 when the review of services would continue to be discussed. Mr Aiken drew attention to the decisions minuted on page 107 and it was agreed to include "that consideration should be given to the provision of Library Services in other ways".

In reply to a question from Mr Aiken, the Chairman said nothing would be done until after the Special Meeting of the Library Committee to deal with the seriousness of the funding situation.

Mr Campbell asked Mrs Ryan to give details of the budgetary figures for the coming financial year. Mrs Ryan explained that the budget for Library Services across Northern Ireland would increase by £2.3m overall in 2005/06; whilst this seemed a lot of money she did not know exactly how it would be broken down across various services. She further explained that this year's budget had no inflationary increase so very few books had been bought this year. Taking into account 2004-05 and 2005-06 inflation, it was likely to be a very small increase overall. Mrs Ryan said that there were still serious problems to be resolved in the Library Service and the Library Committee was looking at a situation where the Board would have to make changes and possible cutbacks in services.

Mrs Ryan explained that she had produced a press release regarding cuts, which had been ready to go out to all the newspapers on the morning of 12 October 2004, when the letter from DCAL had been received regarding the budget; in the light of this she decided not to send out the press release. The question of further press releases would be dealt with after the meeting of the Library Committee on 27 October 2004. Mrs Ryan confirmed that she had received enquiries from the press and had informed them that no decisions had been taken yet.

Councillor J Hanna said that he had received various representations about library provision in Waringstown and Gilford. He was anxious that the people of Gilford should be clear that either people used the Library or they lost it. He said that it was vital for the young and retired people to have this provision and expressed the view that a general campaign needed to be started.

Councillor Bell said that in respect of Waringstown Library he appreciated that this could wait until after the special meeting of the Library Committee. He commented on the poor supply of books.

*(During the discussion of this item Councillor W J Martin left the meeting at 4.12 pm and Mr Sleator left the meeting at 4.13 pm.)*

#### **11.4 DCAL PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES (10)**

Mr Campbell drew attention to this minute and pointed out that this report was required on an annual basis.

On the proposal of Mr Campbell, seconded by Mr Aiken, the minutes\* (L/9/04/8) of the meeting held on 28 September 2004 were adopted.

## **12. SPECIAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE : MINUTES**

Mrs McCaul drew attention to the continuing demand on officers' time as they attended tribunals and Judicial Reviews. She said that most of these cases were about ASD and that this Board had very good provision for these children, having already five units and a further five more on the way and that training for teachers had been identified. On

the proposal of Mrs McCaul, seconded by Mrs McBride, the minutes\* (SE/9/04/10) of the meeting held on 16 September 2004 were adopted.

*(Councillor J F Bell left the meeting at 4.16 pm.)*

**13. CONSULTANTS' SELECTION PANEL : MINUTES**

On the proposal of Alderman Crowe, seconded by Mr Burke, the minutes\* (CSP/10/04/11) of the meeting held on 13 October 2004 were adopted.

**14. COMMITTEE FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF PERIPATETIC TEACHERS : MINUTES**

The minutes\* (PT/9/04/12.1 and PT/9/04/12.2) of the meetings held on 20 September and 29 September 2004 were noted.

**15. MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE : MINUTES**

The minutes\* (M/9/04/13) of the meeting held on 16 September 2004 were noted.

The meeting ended at 4.19 pm.

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**CHAIRMAN**

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**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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**DATE**

\* Paper circulated

\*\* Paper tabled

3 November 2004  
/LD